Introduction

The Participants

The Men of the Wannsee Conference

Hans-Christian Jasch and Christoph Kreutzmüller

On 20 January 1942 senior German officials came together for a meeting, to be followed by breakfast, in a grand villa overlooking Lake Wannsee to discuss the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question"[1] in Europe. What sort of men were they? This is what most visitors to the House of the Wannsee Conference Memorial and Educational Site ask themselves when they visit the former dining room where the meeting very likely took place.[2]

This volume sets out to provide answers. Inevitably, they will not be exhaustive answers. While the Wannsee Conference has come to be seen as key (and sometimes even as a cipher) to the bureaucratically orchestrated mass murder of European Jews, its participants have not.[3] The fifteen men who attended the Wannsee Conference will be profiled in this volume in readable, concise chapters based on primary sources and intense research. Our goal is to convey a distinct sense of these men with in-depth biographical detail, associations and references. We hope that our volume will contribute to research into Nazi perpetrators,[4] which has been a valuable addition to Holocaust research and is a central element of the Memorial's educational agenda.[5] We also hope the volume provides a glimpse into the private and professional networks of the officials who worked in the offices on Berlin's Wilhelmstraße and whom research has so far neglected.[6]

Who were the conference participants? We must start by stating the obvious: there were no women among them. Given the extreme chauvinism of the Nazis, who tolerated women in leading positions at best in

the caring professions, this fact is hardly surprising. Notwithstanding the 2001 TV film *Conspiracy*, and specifically Kenneth Branagh's Heydrich, who seems to have stepped out of a Shakespeare play,[7] these men do not at first glance appear to be evil psychopaths. As shocking as it seems, they were "ordinary men" (Christopher Browning) who knew how to behave, who could appreciate fine architecture (with a view of the lake) and the good things in life, including the refreshments, possibly looted from across Europe, provided after the meeting. The participants at the conference did not make up an established group. The group was convened only for this particular meeting and represented a cross section of the Nazi elite. This illustrates how a "modern division of labor," as Gerald D. Feldman and Wolfgang Seibel observed, was an important premise for the mass murder of European Jews.[8] If nothing else, it allowed the perpetrators to think that they were only one link in a chain of command and therefore not individually responsible for their deeds.

Despite their high ranks, the men profiled in this volume had an average age of little over forty-two, making them relatively young.[9] With the exception of Martin Luther and Wilhelm Stuckart, they came from middle-class families. They were the sons of civil engineers, bakers, farmers and manufacturers. One of them (Friedrich Wilhelm Kritzinger) was the son of a pastor. Eleven of them had Protestant backgrounds. Three were Catholic. Otto Hofmann described himself merely as "a believer" ("gottgläubig") but most probably also came from a Catholic background. The majority of the participants were in SS-terminology Prussians, but Rudolf Lange and Eberhardt Schöngarth came from Saxony, Josef Bühler from Württemberg, Heinrich Müller from Bavaria and Otto Hofmann from Austria, while Georg Leibbrandt was a Russian-German born near Odessa.

Seven of them—Roland Freisler, Hofmann, Kritzinger, Alfred Meyer, Müller, Erich Neumann and Luther—had fought in the First World War and saw themselves as survivors of what Ernst Jünger termed the "Storm of Steel." Only one of them (Müller, who did not graduate from high school) failed to reach the rank of lieutenant. Neumann was badly injured in the White Men's Great War (Arnold Zweig), while quite a few (Freisler, Hofmann, Kritzinger and Meyer) had been prisoners of war. The other eight participants belonged to the so-called "war youth generation"—as described by Ernst Gläser in his excellent novel *Born in 1902*, which was burnt on 10 May 1933 by students on what is now Bebelplatz in Berlin—dubbed the "uncompromising generation" by Michael Wildt.[10] It was shaped by the fervent patriotism and hardship of the war years, as well as by the chaos of the revolution in 1918/19, the

brutal Silesian Uprisings, the occupation of the area west of the Rhine and the Ruhr region by French and Belgian troops, and hyperinflation. There is no doubt that these turbulent years had a formative effect. Ultimately, they wanted to win the war their fathers had lost, and to prove their mettle.

Ten of the fifteen participants had been to university. Eight of them had even been awarded doctorates, although it should be pointed out that it was considerably easier to gain a doctorate in law or philosophy in the 1920s than it is today. Eight of them had studied law, which, then as now, was not uncommon in the top positions of public administration. Many first turned to radical politics as members of Freikorps or student fraternities.[11] Three of the participants (Freisler, Klopfer and Lange) had studied in Jena. In the 1920s, the University of Jena was a fertile breeding ground for nationalist thinking. With dedicated Nazi, race researcher and later SS-Hauptsturmbannführer Karl Astel as rector, it developed into a model Nazi university. Race researcher Hans Günther also taught there.[12] Others, such as Reinhard Heydrich, joined the SS because they had failed to launch careers elsewhere, and only became radical once they were members of the self-acclaimed Nazi elite order.

Some participants, chief among them Freisler, Hofmann, Meyer and Stuckart, were *alte Kämpfer*—that is, "old fighters" who had joined the Nazi Party in the 1920s and were therefore permitted to wear the Golden Party Badge. As a Gauleiter (regional head of the Nazi Party), Meyer occupied an especially high position in the Party hierarchy, which is why he appears at the top of the Protocol's list of participants. While Adolf Eichmann, Heydrich and Luther joined the Party in 1931/32, when it performed well in elections, others such as Bühler, Klopfer, Neumann, Leibbrandt and Schöngarth were what was called "the fallen of March" or "Mayflies," one of the hundred thousands who only joined the Party for opportunistic reasons once its power had been consolidated.[13] Lange, Müller and Kritzinger were only admitted to the Party after the ban on membership was lifted in 1937.

The representatives of the Reich Main Security Office and Hofmann, head of the SS Race and Settlement Main Office, were senior figures in the SS. Klopfer, Stuckart and Neumann had long been members of the SS. Ten days after the conference—on the ninth anniversary of the so-called Machtergreifung (seizure of power)—Stuckart was made a SS-Gruppenführer and Klopfer a Brigadenführer. Both thereby attained the rank of general.

The study of these men's biographies provides clear evidence that the participants had met one another well before the conference on 20

January 1942: almost all of them lived in Berlin's affluent south-west or in the fashionable Tiergarten district, and some of them were members of a men's club where many Nazis networked, including many senior officials on Wilhelmstraße.[14] Freisler, Heydrich and Stuckart, as well as Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger, the Higher SS and Police Leader of the General Government, who had also been invited to the conference, belonged to the German Aero Club, under the patronage of Göring.[15] Freisler, Meyer and Heydrich were members of the Reichstag, where Kritzinger sat on the government bench.[16] Freisler, Kritzinger, Neumann and Stuckart knew one another from the Prussian State Council and the Ministerial Council for Defense of the Reich. Bühler, Freisler and Stuckart would have encountered one another in the Academy for German Law.

Eichmann, Heydrich, Müller, Neumann and Stuckart all attended the high-level meeting held on 12 November 1938 in the Ministry of Aviation, when Göring communicated Hitler's order that "the Jewish Question be now, once and for all, summed up and resolved one way or another."[17] In the course of the four-hour meeting, Heydrich proposed a central office for Jewish emigration, similar to that in Vienna, in order to further expedite the emigration of Jews—which was increasingly becoming more of a desperate flight in the wake of the pogrom still often referred to as Crystal Night.[18] The proposal met with Göring's approval. In January 1939 he established the Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration within the Interior Ministry and made Heydrich its head.[19] When Heydrich issued his invitations to the Wannsee Conference, he enclosed a certificate of appointment signed on 31 July 1941 by Göring, naming him the coordinator of the "definitive resolution of the Jewish Question in the German sphere of influence in Europe." This explicitly extended the powers granted to Heydrich with the founding of the Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration and thus made implicit reference to the conference held on 12 November 1938. In this respect, the pogrom of November 1938 and Göring's conference were directly linked to the Wannsee Conference.

By this time, the "Resolution of the Jewish Question" was being debated in various public media with astonishing openness. Anti-Jewish propaganda was stepped up in the wake of the invasion of the Soviet Union in summer 1941 and the first systematic deportations of Jews throughout the Reich in October 1941. The German media by and large adhered to the instruction issued by Reich Press Chief Otto Dietrich[20] in the Daily Watchword *(Tagesparole)* on 26 October 1941 to bear in mind Hitler's "prediction" made on 30 January 1939. "Long before the outbreak of the current war," he wrote, Hitler had

Map 0.1 Map by Felix Hahn via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.5.

Residences of the Participants

1	Bühler	Krakow
2	Eichmann	Prague
3	Freisler	Habelschwerdter Allee 9/Hüttenweg 14 a, Zehlendorf
4	Heydrich	Břežany (near Prague)
5	Hofmann	Woyrschstraße 48, Tiergarten
6	Klopfer	Pullach (near Munich)
7	Kritzinger	Blücherstraße 6, Zehlendorf
8	Lange	Riga
9	Leibbrandt	Keithstraße 22, Tiergarten
10	Luther	Reichensteiner Weg 34–36, Zehlendorf
11	Meyer	Finkenstraße, Zehlendorf
12	Müller	Corneliusstraße 22, Steglitz
13	Neumann	Schwendener Straße 1, Zehlendorf
14	Schöngarth	Münster
15	Stuckart	Am Sandwerder 28, Zehlendorf

Illustration 0.1 Some of the men who attended the Wannsee Conference had previously met at various functions and festivities. At the pictured gathering, organized by the Reich Ministry of the Interior in 1937, Heydrich and Stuckart are seated opposite one another. Seated next to Heydrich is Kurt Daluege the head of the Ordnungspolizei (regular police), and two seats along from Stuckart—with a full beer glass—is Heinrich Himmler. Unknown photographer, 1937, SV-Bilderdienst, 00028000.

"specifically warned international Jewry against starting a war against Nazi Germany." But this, Dietrich continued, is what they did and, just as the Führer predicted, "the Jews are paying for the blood guilt they brought upon themselves by their own crimes. The Jews alone have this war on their conscience. This issue must be addressed in two columns on the front page."[21]

On 16 November 1941 the highest circulation weekly newspaper *Das Reich* carried a lead article headlined "It is the Fault of the Jews!" by Joseph Goebbels, Reich Minister for Propaganda and Gauleiter of Berlin, whose state secretary Leopold Gutterer was also one of the original invitees to the Wannsee Conference:

> We are now seeing the fulfillment of this prophecy, and the Jews are suffering a fate that, albeit hard, they have more than deserved. Compassion or even regret are totally inappropriate. World Jewry has completely underestimated the strength of its own power in its instigation of this war, and is now gradually experiencing a process of destruction which

Illustration 0.2 Some of the later participants in the Wannsee Conference also met through the Academy of German Law. Pictured here, at a meeting in fall 1936 of specialists in administrative and police law, are (from left to right) Chief of the Ordnungspolizei Kurt Daluege (wearing spurs), Wilhelm Stuckart, Reich Minister Hans Frank, Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police Heinrich Himmler, Reinhard Heydrich, his deputy Dr Werner Best, Berlin Chief of Police Graf Wolf-Heinrich von Helldorff, and an unknown person. Photo by Heinrich Hoffmann, 12.10.1936, BpK, 50059276.

> it wanted for us and would have mercilessly imposed on us if it had had enough power. Now the situation we are in is, according to the Jews' own law, an eye for an eye.[22]

The launch of the Soviet counteroffensive, Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and Germany's declaration of war against the United States turned the war into a world war. Around this time, Goebbels referred in his diary to a meeting on the afternoon of 12 December 1941 between Hitler and the Nazi Reichsleiter and Gauleiter, including Meyer, in his private rooms at the Reich Chancellery:

> With respect of the Jewish Question, the Führer has decided to make a clean sweep. He prophesied to the Jews that if they brought another world war to pass they would experience their own annihilation. That was not just an empty phrase. The world war is here, and the annihilation of the Jews must be the necessary consequence. The question has to

> be examined without any sentimentality. We are not here to pity Jews, but to have pity for our own German people. If the German people have sacrificed about 160,000 dead in the battles in the east, the instigators of this bloody conflict will have to pay for it with their lives.[23]

The publication *Deutsches Recht*, which was compulsory reading for many Nazi lawyers, also referred to the solution of the "Jewish Question" "without sentimentality."[24] Jewry was "bound to suffer historical and earthly death . . . as far as the historical phenomenon of Jews in Europe is concerned."[25]

Owing to a lack of historical evidence, we know little of the participants' activities immediately prior to and after the meeting on 20 January 1942—a cold, clear Tuesday in the middle of an unusually long period of frost.[26] Most of them would have read the newspapers' coverage of the fighting in- and outside Europe. That day, a front page article headlined "Japanese Troops on the Southern Tip of Malacca [Malaysia]" in the Berlin edition of the Nazis' official newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter* reported that the town of Feodosia in Crimea had been "recaptured" but that the Red Army—described as "Bolshevists"—was attacking on the Donetsk front with "strong forces." A propaganda unit report on one infantry unit's defensive battle hinted that the Wehrmacht was struggling with inadequate equipment and suffering heavy losses. The article described a speech made by the U.S. president, in which he announced a drastic boost in U.S. war production, as a "bluff." The Berlin Nazi paper *Der Angriff* carried the headline "Germans and Romanians Recapture Feodosia in Bold Attack" and further reported on the successes of the Japanese army in Malaysia. In another article, headlined "Unwavering Defiance," Robert Ley, head of the German Labor Front, maintained that soldiers in the grip of "honest fanaticism" were invincible. But his words—"German men, German women. German workers, citizens and farmers. Only unwavering defiance will ensure victory . . . now more than ever. We will never capitulate!"—indirectly conveyed just how difficult the situation—known as the "winter crisis"—had become.

On the last page of *Der Angriff*, alongside an advertisement for Togal pain relief pills, a newspaper entitled "Global Battle: Quarterly Journal on the Jewish Question" was touted as the "leading publication in the field of the Jewish problem." Published on the day of the conference—"The Jewish Question in politics, law, culture and the economy"—opened with the typical conspiracy theory that the Jews were to blame for the United States entering the war and were ruining the U.S. national budget. In the reviews section of the journal,

published by an Institute for Jewish Question Studies, the fourth edition of a paper on "The Jewish Question: Material and How to Treat it in School" was positively received, although the reviewer felt that "the part on method should be extended if a further edition is published." In a special supplement, not intended for general publication, the reader's attention was drawn to an order banning Jews wearing the yellow star from using public telephone booths.

The conference participants presumably knew about this ban already. Having read the newspapers, most of them had probably worked for some hours before driving straight from their offices around Wilhelmstraße to Wannsee. Some of them traveled together, to save on gasoline and discuss the meeting ahead. We know that Klopfer, for instance, drove to Wannsee with Kritzinger. Almost certainly Meyer and his subordinate Leibbrandt would have arrived together, too. It is likely that the staff of the Reich Main Security Office who had traveled from farther afield—Schöngarth and possibly also Lange—stayed in their employers' guest accommodation in the villa, which was fitted with furniture stolen from Jewish homes in Prague,[27] and advertised in a Security Police newsletter as offering "all creature comforts."[28] They would have needed only to descend the stairs from the guest rooms on the first or second floor. It is likely that Eichmann, too, who did not have a permanent residence in Berlin and had arrived from Prague via Theresienstadt the day before, had stayed the night in the villa. This would certainly have made it easier for him to supervise the preparations on site in the morning.

After the "meeting followed by breakfast," which started at noon and was probably officially over by 2 P.M., Heydrich, Müller and Eichmann stayed behind in the guest house—according to Eichmann—to relax over a glass of cognac and review the minutes of the meeting. The unnamed staff of the villa—quite possibly Jewish forced laborers, who looked after the house and gardens until February 1943—will have cleared up the conference room and washed the dishes in the meantime. Eichmann probably got straight to work on writing the Protocol, referring not only to his own notes but, by his own account, also to a transcript written by a—now unknown—shorthand typist.[29] Heydrich flew straight back to Prague to host a reception in Prague Castle for the new government of the Protectorate at 7 P.M. the same day.[30] There is no record of what the other participants did in the afternoon after the conference. The ministry officials probably drove back to Wilhelmstraße to continue working at their desks or to report to their superiors and staff on the outcome of the meeting. After work, perhaps they had a drink in one of the men's clubs—the Nationalklub or the Aero Club—or in a bar

on Friedrichstraße or Kurfürstendamm. What did they talk about with other guests or their families at home?

Luther received the Wannsee Protocol some six weeks after the conference. His is the only surviving copy. The covering letter, signed by Heydrich, underlined the consensus achieved at Wannsee: "As now, fortunately, a basic course with respect to the practical implementation of the Final Solution of the Jewish Question has been achieved" and "complete agreement among the offices involved" reached, the "organizational, technical and material preconditions for the practical tackling of the solution" could be sketched out and a draft for the procedure drawn up for Göring. He asked the "offices involved" to appoint specialists to attend the follow-up conference on 6 March 1942.[31] Before Luther consigned the letter to his files, he wrote in the margins that his head of division, Rademacher, should report to Eichmann. A third hand probably highlighted the part of the Protocol that was particularly relevant to the Foreign Ministry: "Instead of emigration, an additional solution has now arisen, following prior authorization by the Führer, of evacuating the Jews to the East."[32] There is no reason to doubt that the other ministries handled their copies of the Protocol in quite a similar manner.

Just nine days after the Wannsee Conference, a meeting was called by the Reich Minister for the occupied Eastern territories. Stuckart's staff member Bernhard Lösener was to report on the points agreed at the Wannsee Conference and a draft law was to be negotiated to regulate the classification of Jews in the occupied Eastern territories. The first follow-up conference, which Heydrich had announced in the letter enclosed with the Protocol, took place on 6 March 1942 in Eichmann's office at Kurfürstenstraße 116. Here, and at the second follow-up meeting on 27 October 1942, the attendees discussed the treatment of "Mischlinge," enforced sterilization, and compulsory divorces of marriages between Jews and Non-Jews. The Propaganda Ministry, now also participating in the discussions, expressed reservations about the latter point in view of the "predictable response of the Vatican."[33] The Protocol and the subsequent correspondence found in Luther's files show that, even after the mass murder had begun, the Nazi authorities still sought to embed it within a political and legal framework. For this reason, the genocide was organized in the manner of a standard administrative procedure, with the cooperation of various offices, even though most of the documents were classified as highly confidential—"Geheime Reichssache"—and only conveyed via special messengers and secret filing departments.[34]

Less than five months after the conference, on 4 June 1942, Heydrich died of injuries caused by an assassination attempt by Czech resistance fighters in Prague. Freisler died during an Allied bombing raid on Berlin

in February 1945. Lange and Müller were probably killed fighting at the end of the war, while Meyer, like tens of thousands of others, took his own life as the Allies advanced.[35] Luther fell from grace in 1943, was interned as a special prisoner in Sachsenhausen concentration camp, and died shortly after the camp's liberation by the Red Army in spring 1945. Schöngarth was sentenced to death a short time after the war, but for his involvement in the murder of an Allied pilot, not his participation in the mass murder of Jews—even though news of the talks at Wannsee had been revealed to the public by *The New York Times* in 1945.[36] Bühler was sentenced to death for his role in the administration of the General Government by a Polish court in 1948. Participation in the Wannsee Conference was a central charge in his case. Consequently, Bühler was the first participant to mention the conference, even before the Protocol was discovered in 1947. Meanwhile, Kritzinger and Neumann were questioned as witnesses in Nuremberg and later released on health grounds. Kritzinger died in 1947; Neumann in 1951. Kritzinger was the only one of the Wannsee Conference participants to show any remorse over his involvement.[37]

Hofmann and Stuckart were sentenced by U.S. military courts in Nuremberg (the NMT), but the Wannsee Conference played a central role only in Stuckart's trial.[38] After the war, the surviving conference participants unanimously—and apparently in collusion—claimed that Heydrich had not mentioned the extermination of the Jews at all on 20 January 1942.[39] Thanks to his skillful defense, in which he managed to stylize him as a resistance fighter, and in view of the poor state of his health, Stuckart received only a short term of imprisonment.[40] Hofmann was sentenced to twenty-five years' imprisonment but granted an amnesty in 1954 by U.S. High Commissioner John Jay McCloy.

Despite the first publication of the Wannsee Protocol by the Union of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime, who also filed charges against the participants,[41] Hofmann, Klopfer and Leibbrandt were able to lead quiet lives in Germany, unchallenged and under their real names, right up until the 1980s. Proceedings against Klopfer and Leibbrandt—like many other cases—were abandoned because of statutory limitation periods and supposed problems with evidence. The postwar biographies of the surviving conference participants can, then, be read as proof of the negligence and errors of judgment that occurred in society and the judiciary when dealing with the perpetrators. The fact that the House of the Wannsee Conference Memorial Museum was not opened until 1992 also reflects this state of affairs.

In this volume, Mark Roseman, whose study of the Wannsee Conference remains seminal, considers how the now infamous meeting

and those who attended it have been perceived over the years. His analysis is followed by essays on each of the participants, grouped according to their main occupation—either within the SS or Nazi and police ministerial bureaucracy. Within these groups, they have been placed in alphabetical order.

Robert Gerwarth, Professor of Modern History at University College Dublin, analyzes Heydrich on the basis of his own highly acclaimed biography as the social climber, power seeker and mass murderer who was the conference host. Building on many years' research into the Nazis' Germanization and settlement policy, Isabel Heinemann, lecturer in Modern and Contemporary History at Münster University, profiles Otto Hofmann, leader of the SS Race and Settlement Main Office, who was imprisoned after the war and later pardoned. Johannes Tuchel, director of the resistance memorial Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand, considers the sphynx-like figure of "Gestapo Müller," who mutated from an unpolitical policeman to an ideologically motivated perpetrator.

Philosopher and Eichmann-expert Bettina Stangmeth sketches an image of the SS-Obersturmbannführer's character that goes beyond the "banality of evil" that Hannah Arendt observed. The SD commanders who were the practitioners directly involved in mass murder in the East—Lange in Riga and Schöngarth in Lemberg—are profiled by Peter Klein, lecturer in Holocaust Studies at Berlin's Touro College and long-time close associate of the Wannsee Memorial, and Olaf Löschke, who previously portrayed his participant of the Wannsee Conference in a successful documentary-drama project.

Schöngarth's opposite number in the General Government, Bühler, is analyzed by Ingo Loose, a leading expert on German occupation policy in Poland, who studied the Polish case files for this essay. The doyen of perpetrator research, Christopher Browning, describes the rise of shirt-sleeved underdog Martin Luther to the elite Foreign Ministry. Markus Heckmann builds on his extensive research to profile Klopfer, former State Secretary at the Nazi Party Chancellery, who settled in the author's hometown after the war. Leibbrandt, Nazi specialist on Eastern Europe and representative of the Reich Ministry for the occupied Eastern territories, who hailed from the Odessa area and had researched German ethnicity as a Rockefeller scholar in the United States before the Nazis seized power, is sketched by his biographer, Martin Munke. The life and work of his superior and deputy to the Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories Alfred Rosenberg, Gauleiter of North Westphalia Meyer, is portrayed by Heinz-Jürgen Priamus on the basis of his well received biography.

Freisler, later known as the bloody judge of the People's Court, who was State Secretary in the Reich Ministry of Justice until summer 1942, is portrayed by long-time freelance associate of the Wannsee Memorial Silke Struck. Historian Stefan Paul-Jacobs and our former colleague Lore Kleiber consider Kritzinger, a Prussian official who held the reins of regime communication in the Reich Chancellery, paying special attention to his son's relationship with him—and with the House of the Wannsee Conference Memorial Museum. We, the editors, have turned our attention to two behind-the-scenes perpetrators in the ministries, Wilhelm Stuckart and Erich Neumann.

We owe a large debt of gratitude to the Hamburg foundation "Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur" for its generous and non-bureaucratic support for this volume. We are also deeply grateful to our German publisher Fritz Veitl of Metropol Verlag (Berlin), who advised and assisted the publication from the outset. Back in 1992, Metropol Verlag published the hitherto largest collection of biographical data on the conference participants, collated by Kurt Pätzold and Erika Schwarz, which marked a watershed of research. Without the help of our colleagues from the Memorial's own, excellently stocked library, the Joseph Wulf Mediothek, our many dedicated colleagues and freelance associates, Sandra Keil and Jana Fritsche's editorial work, this book would not have become what it is. Lastly, our thanks are due to the authors, many of whom are seasoned experts on the participants they profile. Our work benefited greatly from their intensive research and compelling reflections.

Hans-Christian Jasch has been the executive director of the Memorial and Educational Site House of the Wannsee Conference since May 2014. He has authored an acclaimed biographical study on the State Secretary in the Reich Interior Ministry Wilhelm Stuckart and the role of the civil service in Jewish policy, which was published in 2012. His other research focuses on the history of state, law and administration in Nazi Germany and the early years of the Federal Republic. He has contributed to the book *The Law in Nazi Germany* (edited by Alan E. Steinweis and Robert D. Rachlin) published by Berghahn in 2013. A lawyer by training, Jasch has also gained practical experience working as a civil servant in the German Federal Ministry of the Interior since 2001. From 2005 to 2011 he was first seconded to work in Rome as a liaison officer and then to the European Commission in Brussels to work on policy development in the field of countering radicalization and terrorism.

Christoph Kreutzmüller has been connected to the House of the Wannsee Conference since 1992. He studied in Berlin and the UK and wrote his Ph.D. thesis on German banks in the Netherlands between 1919 and 1945. Having coordinated two extensive research projects on the fate of Jewish owned businesses in Berlin 1930–1945 and on Jews in Berlin 1918–1938 for the Humboldt-University (Berlin), he joined the Jewish Museum in Berlin as a curator for the new permanent exhibition in 2016. Kreutzmüller's acclaimed study *Final Sale in Berlin: The Destruction of Jewish Commercial Activity 1930–1945* was published in 2015 by Berghahn. Other publications include *Berlin 1933–1945*, Munich (Siedler) 2013 (with Michael Wildt) and *National Economies: Volks-Wirtschaft, Racism and Economy in Europe between the Wars*, Newcastle (Cambridge Scholars Publishing) 2015 (with Michael Wildt and Moshe Zimmermann).

Notes

1 Letter from Reinhard Heydrich to Martin Luther, 8 January 1942, PA AA, R. 100857.

2 On the history of the House, see: Michael Haupt, *Das Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz: Von der Industriellenvilla zur Gedenkstätte* (Berlin, 2009); Johannes Tuchel, *Am Großen Wannsee 56–58: Von der Villa Minoux zum Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz* (Publikationen der Gedenkstätte Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz, vol. 1) (Berlin, 1992). For the history of the Memorial Museum, see: G. Schoenberner, "Der lange Weg nach Wannsee: Von der Gründerzeitvilla zur Gedenkstätte," *Dachauer Hefte* 8 (1992): 150–63; G. Kühling, "Schullandheim oder Forschungsstätte? Die Auseinandersetzung um ein Dokumentationszentrum im Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz (1966/67)," *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History* 5, no. 2 (2008): 211–35.

3 The Wannsee Conference itself is presented in the Wannsee House permanent exhibition and has been analyzed in numerous publications. Suffice it to mention here only: Peter Klein, *Die Wannsee-Konferenz vom 20. Januar 1942: Analyse und Dokumentation* (Berlin, 1995); Peter Longerich, *Die Wannsee-Konferenz: Der Weg zur "Endlösung"* (Munich, 2016); N. Kampe and P. Klein, ed., *Die Wannsee-Konferenz am 20. Januar 1942: Dokumente, Forschungsstand, Kontroversen* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 2013); Mark Roseman, *Die Wannsee-Konferenz: Wie die NS-Bürokratie den Holocaust organisierte* (Berlin, 2002).

4 For more recent biographical approaches, see: Mark Roseman, "Lebensfälle: Biografische Annäherungen an NS-Täter," in *Der Holocaust: Ergebnisse und neue Fragen der Forschung*, ed. F. Bajohr and A. Löw (Frankfurt am Main, 2015), 186–209. An overview can also be found in: Harald Welzer, *Täter: Wie aus ganz normalen Menschen Massenmörder werden* (Frankfurt am Main,

2005); G. Paul, ed., *Die Täter der Shoah: Fanatische Nationalsozialisten oder ganz normale Deutsche?* (Göttingen, 2002); Michael Wildt, *Die Generation des Unbedingten: Das Führungskorps des Reichssicherheitshauptamtes* (Hamburg, 2002); Ulrich Herbert, *Best: Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft 1903–1989* (Bonn, 1996).

5 Wolf Kaiser, "Die Wannsee-Konferenz: SS-Führer und Ministerialbeamte im Einvernehmen über die Ermordung der europäischen Juden," in *Täter, Opfer, Folgen: Der Holocaust in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. H. Lichtenstein and O.R. Romberg (Bonn, 1997), 24–37.

6 C. Kreutzmüller and M. Wildt, ed., *Berlin 1933–1945* (Munich, 2013), 16.

7 *Conspiracy*, directed by Frank Pierson (United States and Great Britain, 2001).

8 Gerald D. Feldman and Wolfgang Seibel, "The Holocaust as Division-of-Labor-Based Crime: Evidence and Analytical Challenges," in *Networks of Nazi Persecution: Bureaucracy, Business, and the Organization of the Holocaust*, ed. G.D. Feldman and W. Seibel (New York and Oxford, 2005), 1.

9 Götz Aly has pointed out that, on the basis of a statistical survey during the war, Goebbels established that the average age of leading personalities in the middle layer of the Party was thirty-four and inside the machinery of the State forty-four. It could in truth be said that "Germany is today being led by its youth." See Götz Aly, *Hitlers Volksstaat: Raub, Rassenkrieg und nationaler Sozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 2006), 12; also Welzer, *Täter*, 53.

10 Wildt, *Generation.*

11 Norbert Kampe, *Studenten und "Judenfrage" im deutschen Kaiserreich: Die Entstehung einer akademischen Trägerschicht des Antisemitismus* (Göttingen, 1988); Dietrich Heither et al., *Blut und Paukboden: Eine Geschichte der Burschenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main, 1997).

12 See U. Hoßfeld et al., ed., *"Im Dienst an Volk und Vaterland": Die Jenaer Universität in der NS-Zeit* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 2005).

13 See Björn Weigel, "'Märzgefallene' und Aufnahmestopp im Frühjahr 1933: Eine Studie über den Opportunismus," in *Wie wurde man Parteigenosse? Die NSDAP und ihre Mitglieder*, ed. W. Benz (Frankfurt am Main, 2009), 91–109.

14 Rüdiger Hachtmann, *Wissenschaftsmanagement im "Dritten Reich": Geschichte der Generalverwaltung der Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft* (Göttingen, 2007), 153.

15 Membership list of the Aero Club of Germany, January 1939, see: Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, I Abt., Rep. 0001A. We are grateful to Rüdiger Hachtmann, Berlin, for this information.

16 This is presumably one of the grounds on which the conference was postponed at short notice, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, from 9 December 1941 to 20 January 1942, since Hitler wished to announce to the Großdeutsche Reichstag on 11 December 1941 that Germany and Italy were issuing a declaration of war against the United States of America.

17 Stenographical report of the discussion of the Jewish Question with Göring, 12 November 1938, in: International Military Tribunal [IMT], *Der Prozeß gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem Internationalen Militärgerichtshof (IMT): Nürnberg 14. November 1945—1. Oktober 1946, gemäß den Weisungen des Internationalen Militärgerichtshofes vom Sekretariat des Gerichtshofes unter*

der Autorität des Obersten Kontrollrats für Deutschland veröffentlicht, 42 vols., ed. L.D. Egbert and P.A. Joosten (Nuremberg, 1947–49), vol. 28, 499–540, doc. 1816 PS. See minutes of interrogation of Erich Neumann, 18 November 1947, Institut für Zeitgeschichte (IfZ), ZS 1259.

18 See previous note. On the emigration of Jews from the "Third Reich," see Juliane Wetzel, "Auswanderung aus Deutschland," in *Die Juden in Deutschland 1933–1945: Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft*, ed. W. Benz (Munich, 1988), 413–98. After the prohibition of emigration ordered by Himmler in autumn 1941, only an estimated 8,500 persons managed to flee. See M. Richarz, ed., *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland: Selbstzeugnisse zur Sozialgeschichte 1780–1945*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1976–82), 53.

19 Göring's letter, 24 January 1939, PAAA R 100857, sheet 4 et seq.

20 See Stefan Krings, *Hitlers Pressechef: Otto Dietrich (1897–1952): Eine Biografie* (Göttingen, 2010).

21 Cited from Bernward Dörner, *Die Deutschen und der Holocaust: Was niemand wissen wollte, aber jeder wissen konnte* (Berlin, 2007), 160 et seq.

22 "Die Juden sind schuld," *Das Reich*, 16 November 1941. See Dörner, *Die Deutschen und der Holocaust*, 162 et seq.

23 *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels* [The Diaries of Joseph Goebbels], commissioned by the IfZ and with the support of the State Archive Service of Russia, ed. E. Fröhlich, Part II: Diktate 1941–1945, vol. 2: October to December 1941 (Munich, 1996), 487 et seq.

24 W. Gross, "Die rassenpolitischen Voraussetzungen zur Lösung der Judenfrage," *Deutsches Recht: Zentralorgan des NS-Rechtswahrerbundes* 12, no. A 1/2 (1942): 8. The article was published in early 1941 in *Weltkampf* 18, no. 1/2 (1941): 52–63.

25 Gross, "Die rassenpolitischen Voraussetzungen," 2.

26 P. Schlaak, "Das Wetter in Berlin von 1933 bis 1945," *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 9, no. 9 (2000): 182.

27 This is documented in a letter of 20 August 1943 from the Prague Gestapo concerning the whereabouts of confiscated furniture, which was dispatched to Berlin and had been used "in Wannsee to furnish a guest house of the Reich Security Main Office," in: Prague state archive, UPR-ST-AMV 109, box 160, sign. 109-12-140.

28 Cit. from "Befehlsblatt der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD," in: Staatsarchiv Nürnberg, PS-709.

29 See the minutes of interrogation of Adolf Eichmann, 5 July 1960, reprinted in: Kampe and Klein, *Wannsee-Konferenz*, 88.

30 "Regierungsneubildung in Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren," *Völkischer Beobachter*, 21 January 1942.

31 Letter from Heydrich to Luther, 26 February 1942, PAAA, R. 100857, 165.

32 Protocol of the Conference on the Final Solution of the Jewish Question, PAAA, R. 100857, 166–80.

33 See the letter of invitation and transcript of the meeting with accompanying letter from Eichmann, 3 November 1942, PAAA R 100 857, sheet 127 et seq. On this meeting, see Hans-Christian Jasch, *Staatssekretär Wilhelm Stuckart und die Judenpolitik: Der Mythos von der sauberen Verwaltung*

(Munich, 2012), 330 et seq.; also Cornelia Essner, *Die "Nürnberger Gesetze" oder die Verwaltung des Rassenwahns 1933–1945* (Paderborn, 2002), 434–42.

34 The sociologist Baumann places the genocide of the European Jews in the context of the modern age, conceived in the midst of a modern, rational society and carried out by the purest form of bureaucracy ("Bürokratie in Reinkultur"). See Zygmunt Bauman, *Dialektik der Ordnung: Die Moderne und der Holocaust* (Hamburg, 1992), 10 and 31.

35 See Christian Goeschel, *Suicide in Nazi Germany* (Oxford, 2009).

36 "Nazi Jewish Files Found: Papers Confirm Aim to Exterminate People in Europe," *The New York Times*, 21 August 1945. Reprinted in Kampe and Klein, *Wannsee-Konferenz*, 61.

37 Minutes of interrogation of Friedrich Wilhelm Kritzingers, 5 March 1947, IfZ, ZS 988-2.

38 In a "Statement on the Extension of the 'Ministries Case' to Include some Additional High Nazis Responsible for the Extirpation of Jews," 20 November 1947, the World Jewish Congress (WJC) had tried unsuccessfully to extend the charges to other participants of the Wannsee Conference—Neumann, Leibbrandt, Hofmann (here named Hoffmann) and Kritzinger—as well as two of Eichmann's members of staff—Krumey and Girzick (here named Girzik). In this statement, the WJC noted that Stuckart was the only participant in the conference to stand trial in Nuremberg although other participants were in U.S. custody (and Krumey in British custody). As the U.S. authorities had decided to conclude the prosecution of war criminals with the Wilhelmstraße trial, the case no. 11 offered the only opportunity to create a "major case of action by the U.S. authorities against the German initiators (and main culprits) of anti-Jewish action in all of Europe." To follow the case "and to assist in the Jewish aspect of this extremely important case," the WJC sent its own representative to Nuremberg. See Records of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives; also http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/nuremberg/documents/index.php?pagenumber=1&documentdate=1947-11-20&documentid=C194-3-6&studycollectionid=nuremberg (accessed 15 October 2015).

39 See the statements under oath by Gerhard Klopfer, 16 December 1947 and 12 June 1948, BA Berlin (BAL) 99 US 7, Fall XI, 871, 44–54.; also interrogation of Otto Hofmann on 7 January 1948 before the Military Tribunal no. 1 in case VIII, BArch 99 US 7, Fall XI, 871, 62–68; the statements under oath by Georg Leibbrandt of 4 June 1948, BAL 99 US 7, Fall XI, 871, 55–58 and by Erich Neumann of 29 June 1948, BAL 99 US 7, Fall XI, 874, 34–37; testimonies by Stuckart in the Wilhelmstraße trial, Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BAK) NL Stuckart, N 1292/125. See also Essner, *Nürnberger Gesetze,* 414 et seq.

40 "Nuremberg Terms Run 4 to 25 Years," *The New York Times*, 15 April 1949.

41 Copy of a letter from the public prosecutor to the Director of Public Prosecutions at the Supreme Court, 23 January 1957, LAB, B Rep. 058, 4481.

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